832 ward or a woman talking to men out in the open beyond her compound
132 walls, or immoderate behaviour at a dance. However, the conditions
831 are extremely vague and really boil down in the last analysis to a recognition of universally held motivations rather than any definite behaviour. Informants simply take it for granted that almost any one, including the anthropologist, indulges in sexual intercourse of illicit nature given the opportunity.

831 The extent of male dominance is not the only variable con-
833 trolling the incidence of adultery among females. There is also the appeal of skill, attraction, and variety in sexual experience. The Kanuri value skill in intercourse and value the experience itself as a highly pleasurable one which varies greatly from person to person. For example, informants seemed agreed on the pleasure-giving attributes of certain physiological variations in the male and female genitalia, and scaled these as being better or worse for sexual intercourse. Consequently, wide sexual experience is desirable from the point of
578 view of sensual pleasure. Besides this sensual factor, the writer re-
837 ceived the impression that there is a covert recognition of a general female desire to subvert male dominance. This seems to be expressed in the attempts by women to obtain sexual freedom, which the male practises, but forbids and tries to prohibit to the female. This latter point was illustrated over and over again by the attitudes of some of the younger more vocal wives, who constantly joked about adultery or made allusions to it, as a kind of game or trick that a wife plays on her husband.

837 One final point can be made about the locus of marital in-
628 fidelity. As will be shown later, groups of Kanuri towns and villages are joined together into marketing communities. Furthermore, well

837 established small wards and hamlets are the bases of networks of re-
628 lationships among the males. Men tend to find extra-marital partners in wards, hamlets, and towns other than their own, within the marketing community, since the women of their own ward or hamlet are usually the wives of their close friends and relatives.

586 It must not be supposed from the above discussion that there is any positive evaluation of divorce in Kanuri culture. On the contrary, long marriages are valued and divorce is considered by many to
[123] be a melancholy breakdown of relationship. Thus the writer was asked on numerous occasions to use his prestige in the community in order to re-unite separated couples.

581 This desire for long marriages is expressed ritually at the
585 formalization ceremony (sada'a) on the day of the marriage. After the fatiha[1] prayer has been said by the assembled males, it is customary for
[829] the person who has been married the longest to stand up first. If a European is present he fills the function, not because of his superior status, but because European marriages are well known for their durability. Informants stated that this little ritual was an expression of hope and a blessing on the present marriage for its long duration.

581 Personality factors, mutual affection and trust, preferential marriage, economic benefits, prestige accorded by the union to either party and/or their families can all contribute to the stability of marriage. Furthermore, it may be generalized that the longer the
586 term of marriage between a man and a woman, the greater the chance that their marriage will continue. Most divorces seem to take place in the first two years of marriage for non-virgin marriages, and after about four to five years in the case of first marriages (of females).

(1) The first verse of the Koran.